

March 8, 2021

SB 2 : AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL EQUITY AND THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

Members of the Committee on Children,

I have a few concerns about this bill that I would encourage you to consider.

As someone who has worked with at-risk youth in various capacities, I do not feel this legislation for suicide prevention is the appropriate route. My background includes teaching, school counseling, youth prevention programming, and other work with a youth service bureau and juvenile review board. While I support programming and support services for children, that is not what this proposal is.

I am very wary of the long list of people who will receive this "suicide prevention" training. I don't believe it is in the purview of many, and overreporting can certainly have its own consequences for families. These people should not be considered trained professionals in this area.

I do not support unlimited treatment of children without consent of a parent. What is the definition of a minor in CT? How young can a child be and decide they would like to continue "treatment" without their parents knowing?

I am rather unclear on the purpose of tracking "adverse experiences." Why is this necessary? This is not the business of the Dept of Education, nor the state. This is personal and to be dealt with between children, their families, and their practitioners.

There has been an ever-increasing push by the State to insert itself into the parent-child relationship. I understand the concern for child welfare and safety, but this is not the answer. Programs are wonderful, but again, this is not a program. This is government overreach.

Thank you.

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